

## Congressman Dent hails signing of comprehensive port security law

U.S. Rep. Charlie Dent (PA-15), a member of the House Homeland Security Committee, today lauded the President's signing of HR 4954, the SAFE Port Act. This legislation, the result of the Committee's work, greatly strengthens America's security at our ports and helps keep waterways safe from terrorist attack.

"As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I have been monitoring this bill since its inception," said Congressman Dent. "Port facilities and the government must work together in order to make sure these facilities are safe from attack and prepared for any contingency. I am committed to securing all points of entry to our country, by land, sea and air."

The Conference Report on the SAFE Port Act passed by an overwhelming vote of 409-2 in September. The vast majority of the Act deals directly with port security. It requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to verify the effectiveness of each port facility's security plans at least twice a year. It also appropriates \$400 million annually in financial assistance through FY2011 for ports based on risk and need.

The bill also requires DHS to screen 100 percent of all high-risk cargo and to scan for radiation 100 percent of the containers identified as high-risk originating from outside the United States, key provisions Congressman Dent supported.

The Act also authorizes \$213 million over three years for the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT). This is a voluntary program in which shippers, exporters, freight forwarders, and others cooperate with the Department in order to help secure the supply chain. During the course of the floor debate on this bill in May of 2006, the Congressman supported the inclusion of an amendment which would bring "contract logistics providers," business entities that control the movement and warehousing of goods, within the scope of the C-TPAT program.

Finally, the bill also provides for the formal authorization of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO). The DNDO has one of the most important missions within the DHS—the detection and identification of nuclear materials.

“Earlier this year I had the opportunity to visit the DNDO facility in Nevada, and I am firmly convinced of the importance of maintaining the vitality of this organization,” Congressman Dent said. “We want to make sure that we are developing technologies and maintaining vigilance in order to combat what is potentially the most dangerous threat of all, the securing of nuclear materials by terrorist and other ‘rogue’ entities.”

###